



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
4TH FLOOR RACHEL JACKSON BLDG.
320 SIXTH AVENUE NORTH
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0465

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCH APPLICANTS

Tennessee Department of Correction Policy #114.02 outlines the procedures for acquiring research approval within the department. These "Submittal Instructions for Research Applicants" outline the guidelines as established by policy [#114.02 (VI)(C)(1)] for proposing and conducting research within TDOC facilities. The research process within the Tennessee Department of Correction is consistent with American Correctional Association (ACA) standards referenced in *Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 4th Edition*. Specific ACA standards pertaining to research activities within the Department of Correction include 4-4108, 4-4109, 4-4110, 4-4111, 4-4112, 4-4113, and 4-4402.

To begin the research approval process, the following materials should be submitted to the Director of Planning and Research:

Departmental Forms:

1. **General Research Proposal (Form CR-1975):** Basic identifying and contact information for the project and principal investigator.
2. **Standard Consent (Form CR-1976; or a similar consent form approved by TDOC):** If employees or inmates are asked to directly participate in a research project, a consent form must be included as part of the proposal (this is not required when secondary data, e.g., information from computer files are used).

Other Information:

3. **Abstract of the Proposed Research:** A one-page synopsis of the proposed research that should include the name of the principal investigator and the title.
4. **A one-page vitae for each investigator.** This should detail each investigator's credentials for conducting research.
5. **Expected Timeline:** Applicants will submit an expected timeline for the proposed study, highlighting the initiation/ completion of major phases of the project.
6. **Overview of Proposed Research:** Applicants should include a 10-20 page overview of the research project (including all items listed as 3-7) that clearly outlines the purpose of the study (including a basic literature review with citations), and methodologies to be used (e.g., sample populations and sizes, TDOC institutions to be included, etc.). Proposals conducting research for the fulfillment of a degree should submit the same proposal required for approval by their thesis/dissertation committees. This overview should provide sufficient information for departmental reviewers to form an understanding of and evaluate the project.
7. **Institutional Review Board (IRB)/Human Subjects Review:** Applicants are expected to adhere to their institutional requirements for approval of projects involving human subjects research and submit the appropriate documents as part of their proposal packet. In some cases, (final) institutional IRB approval may rest on TDOC's approval of the proposal; in this situation, documentation of IRB approval may wait, but documentation of final IRB approval must be supplied before data collection can begin. If IRB consideration is not required, documentation must be provided.

All materials should be in typed, double-spaced format. Once these materials are received and are complete, they are distributed to the appropriate Department of Correction personnel for approval. Upon approval, research is expected to progress in conjunction with the timeline specified in #5 above. *Projects that deviate significantly from the proposed timeline may be required to seek re-approval through the Director of Policy, Planning, and Research and/or TDOC officials (the Director of Policy, Planning, and Research will be the final arbiter of project*

timeliness). Applicants need to notify the Director of Policy, Planning, and Research, as well as the Wardens of affected institutions once the research project is prepared to begin.

Once a proposal has been approved, any changes to the proposal (e.g., methods, sampling, data collection instruments, forms, timelines, etc.), must be submitted to, and approved by the Director of Policy, Planning, and Research as an **amendment** to the proposed research.

Conducting Research in TDOC Institutions

Institutional security and the safety of staff, visitors, and the general public are of paramount importance in day-to-day institutional operations. As a result, access to inmate participants as a normal procedure excludes inmates assigned to close or maximum custody. As a matter of practice, TDOC staff will aid investigators in recruiting and scheduling potential participants, providing space for interviews and/or survey administration, and other tasks that involve institutional cooperation. Investigators (or their designees) are expected to be on-site and responsible for all aspects of data collection or administration of surveys.

The Department of Correction requires that a copy of the completed research be submitted to the Director of Planning and Research upon completion of the project.

Please submit the required materials to:

Director of Policy, Planning, and Research
Tennessee Department of Correction
4th Floor Rachel Jackson Building
320 Sixth Avenue North
Nashville, TN 37243-0465

If you have any questions, please feel free to call 615-741-1000, ext. 8169, or email planning.research@state.tn.us.